

2023 November Volunteer Moderator Handbook

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1) Introduction

Hello everyone! Thanks for agreeing to help out Rec Room and make our game a friendlier, more welcoming place for new players and everyone in the Rec Room community.

We want this to be a rewarding and non-stressful experience for you, so we've put together some guidelines, tips and tricks, and other information for you. Please read through this document and if you have any questions, please write in to [Email removed so it doesn't get spammed :)]

2) TL;DR

This is a lot of information! While we definitely encourage you to read it, these are the most important points:

- This is a volunteer role; please don't put yourself in situations that cause you undue stress. It's easier (and totally fine) to silently report and not get involved in situations.
- Please familiarize yourself with the Code of Conduct.
- Don't share your account.
- Volunteer Mods are required to have a Discord account and be reachable.
- Every VMod is required to attend the periodic Volunteer Mod Training Classes.
- Don't moderate under the influence.

- Violating the Code of Conduct is grounds for immediate removal from the Volunteer Moderator program. You may also be removed for poor behavior, habitual non-detailed reports or abusing votekicks, but will be given a warning in most situations. Voice moderation is also active at all times in public.
- If you have a complaint about another moderator or staff member, please write in to [Email removed to prevent spam :)]. Do not post it in the mod channels.
- Do not share anything posted in moderator-only channels externally.

3) General Guidelines

First off: don't stress! There is a reason we picked all of you - because we trust your judgment.

If you see someone violating the Code of Conduct in the Rec Center, please feel free to simply report them and/or votekick them. If you feel like trying to show someone the Code of Conduct, you can; but most people that are willfully breaking rules will be combative when confronted. We don't want this to be a stressful experience for anyone, so avoiding confrontation is perfectly acceptable. If you find yourself in a situation where someone is arguing with you, please disengage. If someone is harassing you simply due to being a mod, please report them.

If you decide this is not for you, just let us know! You're not obligated to continue.

Because your reports will be carrying more weight now and you will have the ability to instant kick from the Rec Center. Please don't allow others to use your account. Please make a guest account for others. If you have shared your account credentials in the past, please go to the Settings on rec.net and find the Account section and click "Log out from all devices." You should then change your account password on rec.net. 2FA is mandatory on all VMod accounts.

I know we'll all make mistakes here and there - it's ok! Mistakes are how we learn!

It's very important to remember that being a moderator is not your job or sole responsibility when you play Rec Room. While we appreciate any help from you all, you should always be a player first and mod second.

a. Specific Moderator Abilities

As a Rec Center moderator, you will have the following new abilities/attributes:

- Instant votekick in the ^RecCenter.
- Your reports will (in general, but not always) put someone into a timeout.
- You will have access to the instance browser for the Rec Center. This will allow you to choose a Rec Center to go to. You will be able to tell about how many people are currently in Rec Centers; please do not share this information publicly.
- Your level marker will have a shield around it in the Rec Center.
- Access to the ^Reccenter ban list. **Do not use this.**

- As a room moderator, you can hear and see players that have you blocked. Please respect their space. You're still able to take action if they break the Code of Conduct.
- You will be invited to the moderation channels on discord. This is a great resource to discuss situations with your fellow moderators and keep up on any new developments.
 - We have several channels for VMods to communicate with each other on the Discord.
 - #on-duty-staff: You can see the feed of the latest staff to go online in case you need to reach out to one of us.
 - #core: This is where you can report incidents you otherwise can't report in-game. Use the weekly threads to post your report.
 - #mod-info: This is where staff will post important announcements. We recommend setting up channel notifications for all messages from this channel so you don't miss anything important.
 - #mod-help: This channel is where you can ask questions that other VMods might be able to answer.
 - #mod-chit-chat: This channel is for general off-topic conversations that otherwise wouldn't belong in the other channels.
 - #mod-feedback: This channel is where you can suggest new moderation features. Please make your post a thread if you want to have a discussion about it. You can upvote your favorite suggestions with reactions.
- Info about the use of alt accounts:
 - You have the option to use an alternate account with the same moderation weight in Rec Centers, but no mod shield (if you take the MOD 101 class and have been a Vmod for 1 month).
 - This is an alternative way to moderate while not being observed as a moderator.
 - Mods' alts cannot use the instance browser, or instant kick players from the Rec Center.

b. Reporting Categories

Accurate reports help our staff to implement fair and consistent bans. Please provide descriptions for every report.

Player under 13 on an adult account

- Player sounds or acts under 13
- Player told me they were under 13 (Please provide age given)

Underage reports do not put players on a timeout.

Sexual behavior in a public room

Please provide detailed descriptions.

- Sexual drawings or creations in public areas

- Sexual gestures - things like mimicking masturbation; important to note - this is intended for gestures NOT close to other people (more on that later).
- Sexual language - saying things like "suck my d****" and the like; this includes talking about rape and pedophilia.
- Sexual noises or behavior in public areas - this includes moaning or other sexual noises, and consenting sexual behavior (two people mimicking behavior together) or sexual behavior with inanimate objects (that poor boxing dummy). REMEMBER - in private with consenting parties is fine. In the Rec Center it is 100% not fine.
- Unwanted sexual gestures in another player's space - this is for things that, if it happened in real life, would be sexual assault. My test for this is, if it happened in real life, would I call the cops? If it's yes, use this category. Any unwanted sexual motions where a player is within touching distance go here (ie. masturbation gestures in someone's face, humping people, groping people, etc.) Because this can be a very visceral and invasive experience for players, we punish these more harshly in general, so if you just use the "sexual gestures" category mentioned earlier, they may not be removed from the game for an appropriate amount of time.

Disruptive trolling

- Abusive behavior - consistent patterns of abusive or intimidating behavior (ie. trapping walkers in areas, blinding screen players with photos, repeated bucketing). Generally, we will not use this unless they've been asked to stop as it can sometimes be a joke between friends that we may not have context on. **However**, this is a broad term, and can mean anything. So, we ask that you *always type a description* if you are reporting for this category. It really helps us with reports and deciding what ban to take. **Please do not use this category for verbal harassment** (name calling, insults, slurs). Put those reports under the discrimination category instead.
- Microphone spam - intentional awful/loud noises, or music that they will not turn down despite repeated requests or requests from multiple people. Reporting for this depends on volume, lyrics, and intention. If it is too loud then ask them to turn the music down - most will comply. If the lyrics are violating code of conduct (sounds about sex, racism, etc) then you can, depending on your comfort level, ask them to switch the song or stop playing the music - most will comply. If the music is trolling, extremely disruptive or played with the intent of being abusive behavior then you can, again depending on your comfort level, ask them to stop - most will comply. In the event the user does not comply after being asked to follow the code of conduct then vote kick and/or use the report tool to report the player. You are welcome to simply report the behavior as well, as some players will be confrontational when asked to follow the Code of Conduct.
- Intentional team killing - self explanatory.
- Player in walls or floor - got there by glitch walking or abusing bugs.
- Abusing height or playspace settings - glitching into areas using external means (punishment is the same for both of these two so if you're not sure, they can be used pretty much interchangeably).

Racist, sexist, or discriminatory behavior

- Racist language or actions - racial slurs (including in music) or racist comments but also can include Hitler costumes, gestures or audio. Acceptance or rejected use of the n-word is based on the context of the situation. For example, casual talk with the use of the n word or it being used in a friendly manner is okay. The n-word ending with the “**R**” in any situation is **NOT** acceptable. We are allowing the n-word ending with an “**A**” to be used as long as it’s not used abusively, such as saying it in an aggressive manner towards another player or saying it repeatedly. One note: there are a few common words in Korean and German which sound very close to the n-word. If a player is speaking a language you’re not familiar with, the word is part of a longer sentence, and there is not a clear social intention of them using racial slurs, please give them the benefit of the doubt.
- Sexist language or actions - make me a sandwich, etc. Also of note: I usually include “that” here.
- Homophobic or transphobic language or actions - f-word, “gay” or “queer” used in a derogatory manner. These words can be used in a completely harmless way because after all, people may identify as gay or queer.
- Discriminatory drawings or maker pen objects - usually swastikas in charades.
- Verbal abuse or harassing behavior - for other toxic behavior (screaming in people’s faces, excessive rude or harassing behavior, swearing directed at other players to do harm).
- Threats or encouraging suicide - if you’re hearing “kill yourself” or the like, please use this category and add “kys” to the details.

Inappropriate name, profile picture or bio

- Inappropriate name
- Inappropriate profile photo
- Inappropriate bio

We can look up the history on all of these, so if you’ve included the pre-typed report, no need to elaborate further.

- Impersonating Rec Room staff - this one is a bit tricky. There are a number of Ryus that predate our Ryu, so I wouldn’t report for that unless they are also dressed as her and/or trying to say they work for Rec Room. In general, I’m fine with people dressing as me or using my display name for a joke. It’s only when they are using it to threaten people or try to gain some advantage that I’d report.
Impersonating a Vmod is also reportable, if they claim to be one or that they could report you. Just like in the above case, not everyone might be impersonating a vmod just because they share the same name as a vmod.

There are a number of things that are not strictly against the Code of Conduct; most notably, the use of playspace mover or height adjustment in social areas (example: reccenter, park), and cussing.

If playspace mover is not being used in an abusive manner (to troll others, or obscure someone while violating the Code of Conduct), it is fine to use in **social** areas. It is not allowed in competitive or cooperative games and can be reported in those areas (except as an accommodation - for instance, a player using seated mode).

Cussing can be subjective depending on the intent. Excessive cussing, or cussing directed at a person, can fall under harassing behavior. There is a difference between “what the fuck” and “fuck you”. Please keep in mind that Rec Room has an international audience and cussing is more acceptable in some other parts of the world.

4) Warning system

Make sure that you are up to date with our current policies/ rules related to the warning system. To do so, please [click here](#).

5) De-escalation

You may, at some point, find yourself in a situation where players are becoming very confrontational with you. It's best to avoid these situations if possible, but it isn't always. This can sometimes occur when you remove one person from a group, or sometimes people will specifically try to start trouble with you. You can prevent it by reporting without getting involved in a situation, or by simply leaving a Rec Center where it seems like someone just wants to start problems with you.

If a situation does escalate, it's best to keep these confrontations factual if possible - you may want to move near the Code of Conduct poster to point out specific things. If anyone is insulting or denigrating you, feel free to simply block them, or kick them from the Rec Center if they are being disruptive. Remember that people who are starting trouble are enjoying the drama, and try not to give into it, as arguing with them gives them more fuel to continue.

This also includes players who are going right up to the line but not crossing it - they are trying to get a rise out of you, and the best move is to block them, votekick them from the rec center, or move to a different one yourself.

If you're on PC, we highly suggest installing a recording software called “**Medal.tv**” which will record all interactions or game sessions. Playstation / Xbox / Meta Quest can use the built in clipping feature.

6) Conclusion

Moderation is always a balance and requires constant judgement calls. It's ok to be unsure at times, but always tie everything you do as a moderator back to the Code of Conduct.

Remember that, for new players going into the Rec Center, what they experience will set their expectations of Rec Room. If you are feeling like some behavior you are observing is a gray area, put yourself in the shoes of a level 3 first coming into VR and see if you'd be comfortable or not.

Please feel free to ask clarifying questions in #mod-help, or email A.baller.42 at , Sizz at , or Lupus Tempestas at , so we can elaborate on difficult situations and get everyone on the same page.

[Emails removed to prevent spam to these persons :)]

Thanks so much for helping to make Rec Room a fun and welcoming place for people from all walks of life!